

Ex-KGB Official Kept in Solitary by Wary CIA for Three Years

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WASHINGTON—Somewhere in the United States, living under an assumed name, is a former Soviet secret police official whom the CIA kept in solitary confinement for three years for fear he was a double agent—not a bona fide defector.

Yet during that time the Russian, Yuri Ivanovich Nosenko:

—Became an important witness in the Warren Commission's investigation of President John F. Kennedy's assassination.

—Fingered Samuel Adason Jaffe, an American journalist, as a KGB agent, creating a cloud of suspicion in the American intelligence community that the former CBS and ABC correspondent has spent seven years trying to dispel.

Although the Warren Commission relied heavily on Nosenko's statements that Lee Harvey Oswald was not a Soviet agent, the FBI never informed the commission of Nosenko's confinement or of the suspicions that he might be a double agent.

The Rockefeller commission on CIA abuses reported last year that a Soviet defector, whom it did not identify, had been held "in solitary confinement under spartan living conditions" for three years. CIA and commission sources told The Times that Nosenko was the defector.

Jaffe, now a free-lance journalist living in Bethesda, Md., first learned of Nosenko's allegations about him when he was interrogated by FBI agents in Washington in 1969. The questioning centered on Jaffe's activities while serving as ABC-TV correspondent in Moscow.

Jaffe, who had been considered a reliable source by both CIA and FBI agents with whom he worked as a journalist, acknowledged using KGB agents as sources during his work as a correspondent but denied ever giving them vital or secret information.

Nosenko is a former KGB lieutenant colonel who defected in February, 1964, about 10 weeks after Kennedy's assassination.

Now, declassified CIA and FBI documents give a rare glimpse into the world of intelligence as lived by Nosenko, the defector, and Jaffe, the journalist.

In the first week of February, 1964, Nosenko was a member of the Soviet delegation to a 17-nation disarmament conference in Geneva, Switzerland. Then 36, he was husky, handsome and dark-haired, with heavy eyebrows. He spoke badly broken English.

At that time Jaffe, having left an earlier post with CBS, was ABC's correspondent in Moscow. Then 37, he was a nice-looking, gregarious journalist, with thick red hair.

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Although Nosenko had supervised KGB operations against foreign visitors, he and Jaffe had apparently never met. But Nosenko had access to documents that showed Jaffe had met with other KGB officials.

On Feb. 4, 1964, about 1 p.m., Geneva time, Nosenko suddenly disappeared from the Soviet delegation's headquarters at the Rex Hotel.

Six days later, the State Department announced in Washington that Nosenko had defected and was being granted asylum in the United States. Intelligence sources described the defection as one of the most important intelligence triumphs since World War II.

Nosenko reportedly left behind in Russia a wife and two children. He was described at the time as an expert on disarmament and as an admirer of the Western European way of life, but little else was publicly disclosed.

Recently, however, it has been learned that Nosenko claimed to have directed the KGB in the sexual entrapment of several foreigners in Moscow in the late 1950s. A heavily censored CIA document released recently under the Freedom of Information Act said:

"In September, 1958, he claimed to have personally recruited (blank). It was also in 1958, he said, that he supervised the sexual entrapment of (blank) . . .

"Beginning in the spring of 1959 he said he directed his agents Yefremov and Volkov in a series of successful entrapments (blanks) . . .

"Nosenko stated that he also used these homosexual agents in 1959 in compromising two American guides at the Sokolniki Exhibit . . .

"Finally, Nosenko said, he recruited the Moscow representative (blanks) . . .

"Nosenko claimed that his operational success during 1959 earned him a commendation from the KGB chairman."

Regardless of what other intelligence Nosenko might have possessed, his knowledge of the KGB's surveillance of Oswald in Russia was considered vital. It had been only 10 weeks since the Kennedy assassination and the Warren Commission was in the early stages of its lengthy investigation to try to determine whether there had been a conspiracy.

When the Rockefeller commission released its report on CIA abuses in June, 1975, it gave no clues to

Nosenko's identity. But without naming him, it said:

"The CIA maintained the long confinement because of doubts about the bona fides of the defector. This confinement was approved by the director of Central Intelligence; and the FBI, attorney general, U.S. Intelligence Board and selected members of Congress were aware to some extent of the confinement."

The CIA refused to say whether Nosenko was in confinement or under any duress when he gave his statements about Oswald and Jaffe. And the Rockefeller commission made no mention of the treatment accorded Nosenko while in confinement, although it reported that in another case a defector was "physically abused."

The CIA's official position is that what it calls Nosenko's "bona fides" (credentials as a defector) had been verified by the time of his release from confinement.

However, some U.S. intelligence officials still express doubts. A former high ranking CIA official recently told The Times that even after three years of "adversary interrogation" by the CIA, Nosenko remained under suspicion by some CIA officials.

CIA documents recently released

under the Freedom of Information Act raised questions about some of Nosenko's statements to the FBI and concluded that Nosenko's ignorance of Oswald's communications with the Soviet Embassy in Washington "discredits his claim to complete knowl-

edge of all aspects of the KGB relationship with Oswald."

Nosenko never testified before the Warren Commission and was not listed in the commission's published report. The commission relied on lengthy statements given to the FBI by Nosenko, who told of the KGB's surveillance of Oswald when he was living in Russia before the Kennedy assassination.

Nor did Nosenko testify before the Rockefeller commission. The commission depended upon information from



Sam Jaffe

Nosenko supplied by the CIA.

Neither the Senate Intelligence Committee nor its House counterpart called Nosenko as a witness.

Jaffe, described in one CIA memo as "persistent and energetic," has tried to persuade congressional investigators to get to the bottom of his entanglement with intelligence agencies. But his case has received scant attention from either committee.

The former correspondent, who was interrogated at length by the FBI in 1969, recently prevailed upon the CIA to write a letter which, in effect, says it has no evidence he was ever a foreign intelligence agent.

And after repeated inquiries by Jaffe and The Times about whether the FBI had such evidence, FBI Director Clarence M. Kelley has written a similar letter to Jaffe.

Utilizing the Freedom of Information Act, Jaffe obtained voluminous

CIA and FBI documents detailing how he cooperated extensively with both intelligence agencies during the 1950s and 1960s in providing information about his contacts as a journalist with Russian and Chinese Communists.

"I've been suspected of being everything—CIA, FBI, KGB—you name it," Jaffe says. "And I've done nothing except what many other journalists have done."

The records also show how Jaffe, in his journalistic endeavors, dealt with the KGB while stationed in Moscow and how he immediately informed the American Embassy after a KGB official had tried to recruit him as a secret agent.

The documents detail a KGB effort in October, 1962, to blackmail Jaffe after he and a Russian woman he was dating were involved in a car accident.

And they show how Jaffe's KGB contact warned the correspondent that Nosenko had defected and would probably finger him as a KGB agent. And indeed Nosenko did.

Nosenko said that when he defected he was deputy chief of the Tourist Department, second chief directorate of the Committee for State Security, which is concerned with internal security.

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Nosenko told the FBI that he had supervised the handling of the KGB file on Oswald in the Tourist Department and could provide information on Oswald's stay in the Soviet Union between 1959 and 1962.

The gist of Nosenko's statements was that the KGB never even considered using Oswald as an agent. On the contrary, he said, it considered him mentally unstable and not very bright.

Nosenko told of a suicide attempt by Oswald after his request to remain in Russia was rejected by Soviet authorities.

"Oswald had locked himself in his room and when entry was made to his room Oswald was found bleeding from self-inflicted wounds to his wrists," an FBI memo to the Warren Commission said. "Nosenko stated Oswald was rushed to a hospital, and Nosenko expressed the opinion that if Oswald had not received immediate medical assistance he would have died."

After Oswald's release from the hospital, he threatened suicide again upon being told that he could not remain permanently in the Soviet Union, Nosenko said. At this point, Nosenko said, the second directorate

of the KGB "washed its hands of Oswald."

Nosenko said that although Oswald was permitted to remain temporarily in the Soviet Union, KGB agents were instructed "to maintain a discreet check" on his activities in Minsk, where he lived with his Russian wife, Marina.

"Nosenko commented that the possibility that Oswald might be a 'sleeping agent' for American intelligence had been considered by the KGB but at this time the interest of KGB headquarters in Oswald was practically nil," according to the FBI memo.

Nosenko said he did not know who had granted Oswald permission to reside temporarily in Russia, but said he was sure it had not been a KGB decision.

He went on to say that, after Oswald and his wife left the Soviet Union for the United States in June, 1962, he had not heard of Oswald again until receiving word in September, 1963, that he had applied for a reentry visa at the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City.

"Nosenko's department had no interest in Oswald," the statement continued, "and recommended that Os-

wald's request . . . be denied." The request was denied.

Although Nosenko said he did not know whom Oswald contacted at the embassy in Mexico City, the CIA, in a recently declassified document, reported it had learned from independent sources that the contact was "a KGB officer under consular cover."

Nosenko said Oswald's name did not come up again until the KGB was notified that he had been arrested in the Nov. 22, 1963, assassination of President Kennedy.

On orders of Gen. Oleg M. Grihanov, chief of the KGB's second chief directorate, Nosenko said, he telephoned the KGB office in Minsk to get a summary of the Oswald file.

The summary concluded with a statement that the KGB at Minsk had endeavored "to influence Oswald in

the right direction."

That "greatly disturbed" Grihanov, according to Nosenko, because the KGB had been under orders to take no action except to "passively observe" Oswald's activities.

On Grihanov's orders, Oswald's complete file, together with an explanation of the concluding statement, was flown by military aircraft from Minsk to Moscow. Nosenko said he reviewed the entire file before

giving it to Grihanov, who forwarded it through channels to Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev.

The explanation, Nosenko said, was that an uncle of Marina Oswald voluntarily approached Oswald and suggested that he "not be too critical of the Soviet Union when he returned to the United States."

The FBI memo noted:

"Nosenko commented that when the KGB at Minsk was first requested to furnish a summary of the Oswald file it was unaware of the international significance of Oswald's activities and had included the statement reporting their endeavors to influence Oswald as a self-serving effort to impress the KGB Center."

Nosenko also told the FBI that Marina Oswald had not been employed as an agent of the KGB. He said she had been a member of the Komsomol (Communist Party Youth Organization) but had been dropped from the rolls on an unknown date for non-payment of dues over a long period of time.

Although Nosenko never appeared before the Warren Commission, he expressed a willingness to testify, the FBI said, as long as it would be "in secret and absolutely no publicity is given either to his appearance before the commission or to the information itself."

Neither the CIA nor the FBI will discuss Nosenko's confinement. But a

former CIA official told The Times that Nosenko was not put in confinement until four or five months after his defection. For at least three years thereafter, Nosenko was interrogated periodically.

At least as late as Jan. 5, 1968, the CIA was still subjecting Nosenko to interrogation about his knowledge of Oswald's stay in the Soviet Union and the KGB's relationship with him. On that day he was required to answer some questions in his own handwriting.

Since his defection in 1964, Nosenko is known to have surfaced in a public way only once—in May, 1970, when he walked into a Reader's Digest office in Washington and offered to assist John Barron with his book, "KGB the Secret Work of So-

viet Secret Agents."

"I forget the date," Barron said in an interview. "but one morning a rather handsome, distinguished-appearing man who spoke in a Slavic accent arrived in my office here and said, 'I am from the center.' In KGB jargon that means headquarters."

Barron said Nosenko told him he had read in Reader's Digest that Barron was writing a book on the KGB and he wanted to offer his assistance.

"I had asked the CIA earlier if we could be provided with Nosenko's address so we could communicate with him, but had been told he didn't wish to communicate with a journalist," Barron said.

Barron, who interviewed Nosenko several times in subsequent months, considered Nosenko a "gold mine" of information and quoted him several times in the book.

"He was very straightforward in telling me there were certain areas that he was not free to get into, but was good in making distinctions between what he knew as a result of his own experiences and observations as opposed to what he heard," Barron said.

Nosenko is believed to live in the Washington area.